

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3462

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SP, IT

SUBJECT: ANTI-FRANCO PROTESTS DWINDLING

REF: ROME 14083

SUMMARY: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, STRIKES AND ANTI-FRANCO RECRIMINATIONS ARE CONTINUING IN ITALY, BUT ON A DIMINISHING SCALE. END SUMMARY.

1. PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS PROTESTING THE ACTIONS (AND THE EXISTENCE) OF THE SPANISH REGIME ARE CONTINUING BUT LOSING STEAM IN ITALY. ON OCTOBER 2 THERE WERE PROTEST

DEMONSTRATIONS IN ROME, BARI, GNEOA, MILAN AND SMALLER CITIES. IN ROME CISL LABOR LEADER BRUNO STORTI SHARED THE PLATFORM WITH A SPANIARD IDENTIFIED AS GARCIA DUARTE, A LEADER OF THE SPANISH UGT. SPEAKING IN SPANISH DUARTE GAVE A SURPRISINGLY SMALL CROWD (PERHAPS 10,000) AN EMOTIONAL RECITAL OF FRANCOIST KILLINGS AND TORTURE OF WORKERS, UNIONISTS AND STUDENTS. REPORTEDLY ARMY DRAFTEES AT BARI CARRIED OUT A PROTEST "AGAINST FASCISM AND FOR DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN" WITH AN INTERLUDE OF PRE-MEAL STANDING SILENCE.

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2. A FIFTEEN MINUTE "GENERAL STRIKE" ON OCTOBER 2, CALLED BY THE EUROPEAN LABOR CONFEDERATION, WAS A FIZZLE, FAR MORE HONORED IN THE BREACH THAN THE ACT. EVEN ROME'S LEFT-LINING IL MESSAGERO COULD FIND NOTHING MORE ENTHUSIASTIC TO SAY THAN THAT THE STRIKE "INVOLVED ALL CATEGORIES OF WORKERS." HOWEVER, AIR, SEA AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS LINKS WITH SPAIN WERE EFFECTIVELY CUT THROUGHOUT THE DAY BY THE VARIOUS UNIONS. OTHER SCATTERED AND SPARSE WORK STOPPAGES IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS WERE OF MINOR CONSEQUENCE. MINIMAL REPORTS OF VIOLENCE IN STRIKES OR OTHER MANIFESTATIONS.

3. DC AND PCI REPRESENTATIVES HAVE REQUESTED THAT "SPAIN" BE DEBATED IN THE CHAMBER FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. THE CHAIRMAN IS EXPECTED TO SCHEDULE THE DISCUSSION FOR OCTOBER 8 OR 9.

4. THE GOI PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE EXECUTIONS REPORTED REFTEL, WAS CARRIED ACCURATELY BY FBIS VIENNA DTG 290945Z SEP 75.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE FIZZ SEEMS TO HAVE GONE OUT OF THE ANTI-FRANCO-FASCIST ACTIVITY IN ITALY, IT WOULD LIKELY PROVE RESURGENT SHOULD FURTHER SPANISH EXECUTIONS TAKE PLACE. OTHER THAN THE MSI, SPAIN HAS FEW PUBLIC DEFENDERS IN ITALY THESE DAYS. VOLPE

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